

March 22, 1956

PERSONAL



Dear Billy:

I have been urgently thinking about the matters we discussed in our conversation the day before yesterday. I refer particularly to that part of our talk that dealt with the opportunity open to ministers of promoting both tolerance and progress in our race relations problems. I think we agreed, for example, that they could discuss the mounting evidence of steady progress toward elimination of racial difficulties, even though all reasonable men appreciate that eventual and complete success will not be attained for some years. Ministers know that peacemakers are blessed; they should also know that the most effective peacemaker is one who prevents a quarrel from developing, rather than one who has to pick up the pieces remaining after an unfortunate fight.

As I told you, my mind constantly turns to the ease with which effective steps might be taken in the adult as compared to the juvenile field. Of course the kind of evidence that we should like to see pile up is the kind that would convince Federal District judges in the several localities that progress is real. All of us realize, I think, that success through conciliation will be more lasting and stronger than could be attained through force and conflict.

Certain questions occur to me that might be worth your consideration:

- a. Could we not begin to elect a few qualified Negroes to school boards?
- b. The same to City Commissioners?
- c. The same to County Commissioners?